

Dudley Observatory Board of Trustees
Minutes of the Meeting on
January 14, 2009

Members present: Sam Wait (President), Janie Schwab, Erin Breslin, James B. Comly, Lucy Comly, Alan French, Doug Klein, Mike Kornstein, Vincent Maine, Brian Mercy, Heidi Newberg, Jean Sheviak, Cherrice Traver, Joan Wagner, Robert Ward, Vince Amodeo, Francis Wilkin

Members absent: Tom McFadden, Mary Crone Odekon, Jillian Perno, Daniel Wulff

Guests: None

Sam Wait called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The board approved the minutes of the meeting on November 5, 2008 with minor changes.

Finance & Physical Plant Committee

Jim Comly distributed a detailed description of Dudley's financial status. Net income for the period July through December was \$13,223.98 as against a budgeted amount of less than \$2,000.00. However, our endowment has declined substantially since 6/30/08. Normally take 5% of endowment for operating budget which for this year allows approximately \$66,400 versus an average contribution of \$100,000 in past years. The Board discussed planning for the budget.

Mike Kornstein reported on lease negotiations and was authorized by the Board to negotiate a two (2) year lease renewal with a ninety (90) day opting out provision.

Executive and Long Range Planning Committee

Sam Wait announced the resignation of Mary Crone Odekon, which the Board reluctantly accepted. Sam indicated he received a letter from Lucy Comly requesting a change in her status to Board Member Emeritus; the board accepted with regret, and with thanks for many years of service.

There was discussion of the status of Dudley as an ex officio member of the board of the Schenectady Museum.

Sam Wait reported on a meeting he had with John Smith of the Children's Museum of Troy in which they discussed possible interaction with Dudley. The Museum is located in the Rensselaer Technology Park and there seems to be extra space in their building if Dudley is interested. It was suggested that John Smith be invited to a Board meeting.

There was a brief discussion of the recent activities of the Site Plan Committee.

Sam Wait noted that the Eastern Region science Fair is at RPI on March 21st. After discussion, it was decided that Dudley would again have a table at the fair.

There was discussion about additional representation from the University of Albany on the Board and a suggestion was made that the Nominating Committee look for additional representation.

Sam Wait noted that his term as President was coming to an end and thanked everyone for the privilege of serving as Board President and for his interaction with Dudley. He noted that he will be retiring from RPI in June and we will need a new board member from RPI.

Nominating Committee

Bob Ward presented nominations for officers of the Board – for President, Vince Amodeo; for Vice President, Alan French; for Treasurer, Vince Maine; for Assistant Treasurer, Jim Comly; and for Secretary, Michael Kornstein. Upon motions duly made, the board approved the nominations and the nominees assumed their offices.

By-Laws Committee

Brian Mercy reported on the updating of the by-laws to add indemnification for Board members. There was discussion about adding a definition of the duties of Assistant Treasurer, updating the definitions of the committees, and re-defining or changing quorum requirements. Proposed by-laws are to be presented before the next Board meeting.

Education Committee

Alan French reported that applications have gone out to students and teachers for the Rising Star Program and discussed trying to make personal contacts to boost participation. There was some discussion about outreach – currently Dudley reaches out to seven (7) counties and there was discussion about getting the word out to a broader base.

There was discussion about the Star Party dates and the Skywatch lectures for next fall. Janie reported that the budget for the lectures was \$5,000 in expenses but we actually made \$3,000.

Report of the Collections & History Committee

Jean reported that Dorothy Barnes is continuing her work cataloging the observatory publications. She has about 20 more hours remaining in the CDLC grant money. This may allow her to complete most of the first pass through the list of publications.

Janie reported that Dudley has received grant money for the purchase of new library materials, which will need cataloging. CDLC can do the cataloging as part of their fee-based cataloging service for members.

Janie has not been able to find information about the second Fasoldt clock in the archives, and Roy could not provide any information. When we have it refurbished (a donation) she recommends having it done in its current form keeping the historic changes. The \$100,000 purchase offer for this clock was from a Fasoldt clock collector whose original intention was to donate his entire clock collection to a museum, so perhaps it could ultimately come back to Dudley. The group agreed that further work is necessary before a decision is made to sell, including consideration of the previously-adopted policy of not de-accessioning collections before deciding on Dudley's future direction. The group requested that the committee work with

Janie to investigate the value of the clock (generally acknowledged to be worth less than the \$100,000 offered for it) and attempt to determine its significance to Dudley's history.

Report of the Events Committee

The committee is meeting regularly and needs a new chair. Janie provided information about upcoming events:

- The Harvard Alumni Club is interested in collaborating on one of the Skywatch lectures.
- SPAC would like Dudley to come back again next summer.
- Dudley will be working with the Troy Children's Museum on a February 7 program and would like to do more with Dudley.
- The Henry Hudson Planetarium wants to collaborate on an Astronomy Day program (May 2).
- Adirondack Public Observatory wants Dudley to join them at the Northeast Astronomical Forum. They have also invited Dudley for programs and observing in July.
- 1027, a local jazz and Hubble group which does music and astronomy education wants to do more programming.
- UCALL will be doing a series of 5 lectures.

Janie noted that committees are very important to Dudley. They should be chaired by a board member, but may include outside members.

Report of the Membership & Donor Development Committee

Doug Klein is the new chair. Janie noted that Dudley gets up to 100 donations per year, including memberships, but more corporate support and sponsorships are needed. Dudley has lots of grant money for books and equipment, but it is difficult to find support for operations and salaries.

Unfinished Business

We need to contact Jillian Perno, who was named a trustee but has never attended a meeting.

New Business

Bob Ward asked about the issues involved in finding a new site for Dudley. He suggested developing a list of what needs to be considered and what we want the finished product to be.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael A. Kornstein, Dudley Board Secretary